

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. **10/565,784**
Amendment filed April 30, 2007
Reply to OA dated January 31, 2007

REMARKS

Claims 1, 12 and 15 are amended in order to more clearly define the claimed invention.

Claims 2, 4, 6 and 11 are amended to be in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter is entered. It is believed that this amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action mailed January 31, 2007.

The allowability of Claims 2 - 4, 6 and 11 is gratefully acknowledged. In view of the amendments to Claims 2, 4, 6 and 11, it is believed that claims 2 - 4, 6 and 11 are now in allowable condition and this allowance is respectfully requested.

The title is amended as indicated above. In view of the amendment, it is respectfully requested that the objection to the title be removed.

Claims 12 - 14 are rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Reconsideration and removal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

It is alleged in the Office Action that Claim 12 is indefinite because it should read that “the slide-engaging part of the connector block or the power block enters into a dead space of the inner cover”, and Claim 13 is indefinite because it should read that “the dead space is within the inner cover”. Although “Claims 12 - 14 ” is recited in the rejection statement, no detail is given regarding Claim 14.

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It is respectfully submitted that Claims 12 - 14 are correct as written (see for example page 19, lines 9 - 11 and page 34, lines 9 - 14 for descriptions of the claimed components). A minor amendment to Claim 12 to include the word "respectively", is entered in order to more clearly define the claimed invention.

In view of the above remarks, removal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

The allowability of Claim 14 is gratefully acknowledged, as mentioned above, it is believed that Claim 14 clearly defines the claimed invention. Allowance of Claims 14 is respectfully requested.

The present invention is a junction block having an inner cover, connector blocks and a power block disposed along outside edges of the inner cover to form a circumferential wall of the junction box and at least partially define a space. Busbars and a wiring module are disposed being piled up within the space surrounded by the connector blocks and the power block. Terminals of the connector blocks, terminals of the power block and terminals of the busbars are connected to the wiring module.

Claims 1, 5, 7 - 10, 12, 13 and 15 are rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Iwata (U.S. Patent No. 6,430,054). Reconsideration and removal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

In regard to Claim 1, it is alleged in the Office Action that Iwata discloses a junction block (1) comprising: an inner cover (4); connector blocks (11, 12) and a power block (13) disposed outside the inner cover (4); and busbars (6) and a wiring module (5) disposed being piled up within

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a space surrounded by the connector blocks (11, 12) and the power block (13), wherein terminals of the connector blocks, terminals of the power block and terminals of the busbars (6) are connected to the wiring module (5).

It is respectfully submitted that Iwata does not disclose busbars and a wiring module disposed being piled up within a space surrounded by the connector blocks and the power block in a manner taught in the present specification and shown in the drawings. Claim 1 is presently amended to more clearly define the arrangement of the connector blocks and power block to make clear that the “space” is at least partially defined by the connector blocks and power block. Support for the amendment is found at least on page 3, lines 18 - 24, and Figs. 1 and 6.

It is further alleged that:

in regard to Claim 5, Iwata discloses the terminals (24c) of the connector blocks and /or the terminals (26a) of the power block and/or the terminals (27) of the busbars are pressure welding terminals;

in regard to Claim 7, Iwata discloses an electronic unit (9) mounted on the back of the inner cover (4) and connected to terminals (30a) arranged on the back of the busbars (6);

in regard to Claim 8, Iwata discloses the inner cover (4), the connector blocks (11), (12) and power block (13) are slidingly combined;

in regard to Claim 9, Iwata discloses a junction block (1) comprising: an inner cover (4) and a power block (13) and connector blocks (11, 12) combined with the inner cover (4) wherein components such as circuit boards (5) are disposed and connected within a space surrounded by the power block (13) and the connector blocks (11, 12), wherein the power block (13) and the connector

blocks (11, 12) form the outside of the junction block (1);

in regard to Claim 10, Iwata discloses the combination of the power block (13) and the connector blocks (11, 12) with the inner cover (4) is carried out by engaging a slide-engaging part (on the connector housing) with a guide part (9) in a direction crossing the inner cover (4) at right angles;

in regard to Claim 12, Iwata discloses the slide-engaging part (9) of the connector block or the power block enters into a dead space (23);

in regard to Claim 13, Iwata discloses the dead space is within the inner cover (4); and

in regard to Claim 15, Iwata discloses the combination of the power block (13) and the connector blocks (11, 12) with the inner cover (4) is carried out in the vicinity of a mount (9) of the inner cover (4).

Regarding Claim 9, it is respectfully submitted that the power block (13) and connector blocks (11, 12) do not form the outside of the junction block of Iwata, as outside walls of box-shaped case wall (2) form the outside of the junction block (1), as shown in Fig. 1.

Regarding Claim 10, it is respectfully submitted that Iwata does not disclose a “guide part” or a “slide-engaging part”, as component (9) which is alleged by the Examiner to correspond to those parts, is an “electrical element”, as disclosed at column 3, line 30.

Regarding Claim 12, it is respectfully submitted that Iwata does not disclose a “slide-engaging part”. The alleged “slide-engaging part” is an “electrical element”, as mentioned above.

Regarding Claim 15, the intent of Claim 15 to define that the engaging parts of the power block (5) and connector blocks (3, 4) with the inner cover (2) is carried out in the vicinity of the

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mount (43). It is believed that the word "combination" may not clearly convey such meaning. Therefore, Claim 15 is amended, as shown above. Regarding the rejection of Claim 15, it is respectfully submitted that Iwata does not show a mount or engaging parts. The alleged mount (9) is an "electrical element", as mentioned above.

In view of the amendments to Claims 1, 12 and 15, and the above remarks, it is believed that Claims 1, 5, 7 - 10, 12, 13 and 15 are now patentably distinct and non-obvious in view of Iwata. Therefore, removal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

It is believed that Claims 1 - 15 are now in condition for allowance. Allowance of Claims 1 - 15 is respectfully requested.

If there are any issues of a minor nature remaining, the Examiner is urged to contact Applicants' attorney, the undersigned at Area Code (202) 659-2930.

In the event that any fees are due in connection with this paper, please charge our Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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